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ABSTRACT

Japan experienced a period of great social change in the middle of the nineteenth century, ending a long period of national isolation. This was the period of the Meiji Restoration. During the modernization and westernization that followed, the government made great advances in modernizing the Japanese language. This process had two phases: (1) establishment of Modern Colloquial Japanese, especially in written form, and (2) establishment of a modern vocabulary with concepts introduced from the Western world. The development of a system of public elementary and secondary education during the first two decades of the Restoration period was an essential element in the success of this language adaptation process. (MSE)

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The Development of Japanese Society and the Modernization of
Japanese at the Time of the Meiji Restoration

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Introduction

Japan experienced a period of great social change in the middle of the nineteenth century which is called the MEIJI Restoration. After more than two hundred years of national seclusion, Japan opened her gates to foreign countries.

The TOGUGAWA Shogunate in EDO, the old name of TOKYO, had secluded the nation from the beginning of the seventeenth century to exclude Catholic missionaries and political invaders from Western Europe. Only the Dutch and the Chinese were permitted to have contacts with a limited number of Japanese at NAGASAKI, the only port open to them. The Dutch were given this privilege because they were judged to be interested in pursuing a commercial approach without religious objectives. And the Chinese were not Christian at all.

The modernization of Japanese society was delayed by the national seclusion policy, but on the other hand, Japan managed to avoid being swallowed by the gigantic colonialization undertaken by the Western nations.

Towards the middle of the nineteenth century a series of conflicts between Western countries and China produced the view that Japan should open her gates to the world in order to strengthen her economic and military power and to protect the country from colonialization by the Western powers. In this manner, the TOKUGAWA Shogunate was compelled to abandon the national seclusion policy and to open several ports to foreign traders between 1854^{and} 1868. In the process, however, the TOKUGAWA Shogunate gradually lost control of the whole nation.

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The MEIJI Restoration occurred in 1868, the TOKUGAWA Shogunate returned political rule to the Emperor and his advisors. As a symbolic gesture of the effort to modernize, Japan the young Emperor MEIJI moved to EDO from KYOTO, where generations of Emperors had resided for more than one thousand years. EDO was renamed TOKYO, which means 'Eastern KYO,' that is, 'eastern capital'.

The new government of the Emperor MEIJI began the modernization of the nation very rapidly. They introduced all sorts of modern Western civilization and culture within a very short period such as: science, technology, medicine, literature, philology, and so on. This social movement was called BUNMEI-KAIKA, which means literally 'civilization-opening,' that is, civilization and enlightenment.

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In the course of modernization and westernization, MEIJI leaders advanced significantly the modernization of the Japanese language and succeeded in adapting it to the needs of a modern society.

The modernization of the Japanese language had two phases: the one is the establishment of Modern Colloquial Japanese, especially, Modern Written Colloquial Japanese, and the other is the establishment of a modern vocabulary with which the concepts and ideas introduced from the Western world had to be expressed and understood.

A Brief Outline of the History of Japanese

Before beginning the description of the course of the modernization of the Japanese language, a short introduction to the history and the stylistic variations of Japanese is in order.

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The history of Japanese language can be divided roughly into five stages: Old Japanese, Middle Japanese, Early Modern Japanese, Early Modern Japanese and Modern Japanese.

Old Japanese

Old Japanese is divided into two stages: Early Old Japanese and Late Old Japanese.

Early Old Japanese is the language which was used mainly in the NARA period, i.e. in the eighth century. The writing system used Chinese characters which had been borrowed in the fifth century. The people in this period adapted the Chinese syllabic phone of a character approximately to that of Japanese. They used these characters to transcribe the Japanese syllabic phones without any regard of the original meaning of the characters. Thus they obtained a tool to write Japanese words syllable by syllable. Those characters were called KANA. They were used typically in the MAN-YOO-SHUU, a collection of 4,516 poems in twenty volumes. Therefore they were called later, MAN-YOO-GANA.

Another way of writing was developed, in parallel with the KANA transcription, which contrary to KANA reflected the meaning of the Chinese characters, i.e., the words. A Chinese character or a certain combination of characters, i.e. a Chinese word with its original Chinese meaning was adopted and a Japanese word of the same or ^asimilar meaning was adapted to this Chinese word or character. In this manner each Chinese character was 'read' in Japanese, i.e., a Japanese word form was given to the Chinese character. Thus, the Japanese developed another way of writing Japanese words by exploiting their ^{meaning}. In this case, the phones of Chinese characters, or words, were completely ignored in contrast with the KANA transcription.

In addition to these two ways, ^{the} Japanese of the NARA period and later borrowed Chinese words directly with the Chinese phones, which were of course pronounced or read with Japanese accents. In this way a great many Chinese words were introduced into Japanese. This process began in the earliest stage of Old Japanese and continued until the recent stage of Early Modern Japanese. These Japanese words were called KANGO, literally 'Chinese word'. ^{s)} The proportion of KANGO words in the Japanese vocabulary was and is very high. In Modern Japanese more than 50 percent of the vocabulary is comprised of KANGO words. Later, in the stage of Early Modern Japanese, the rules of word formation for KANGO achieved such autonomy that many KANGO words were coined in Japan for the new ideas which were introduced from the Western world in the EDO period and during the era of the MEIJI Restoration.

Thus, the writing of Japanese was formed by using a mixture of the three ways above mentioned. While it was possible to write Japanese with the syllabic letters only, this was unusual, the combined use of KANA and Chinese characters being the normal practice.

Japanese is an agglutinative language. It has suffixes, which have no semantic meaning, but stand for grammatical functions. The substantivals are followed by particles, which indicate the grammatical functions of the nouns or pronouns such as cases or adnominal as well as adverbial modifications. The verbals and adjectivals are followed by many kinds of endings, which indicate also, grammatical functions. On the contrary, Chinese is an isolating language.

Chinese words have no morphological elements which stand for grammatical roles. For writing Japanese, KANA syllabic letters were used for particles and endings, while Chinese characters were used to write word stems. Of course, quite many of the stems were also written with KANA syllabic letters.

Late Old Japanese was developed in the HEIAN period which continued from the end of the eighth century to the early twelfth century. A new capital was constructed in KYOTO where an aristocratic court culture came into existence.

During this period the Japanese ^{developed} the style and the writing system of Pure Classical Japanese, which was preferred by the women at the imperial court. The works of prose literature such as GENJI-MONOGATARI, a tale of a prince by the name of GENJI, were written in this style by the ladies at the emperor's court. For this reason the literature of this period is called 'the women literature of the HEIAN period'.

In this period the writing style of KANA was developed in two ways: HIRA-GANA and KATA-KANA. HIRA-GANA was developed from one of the traditional writing styles of Chinese characters, a style which is cursive and well suited for rapid hand writing. Since HIRA-GANA letters have very cursive forms and are round and fluent, they were preferred by female writers of Pure Classical Japanese literature.

Middle Japanese

Middle Japanese is characterized by a Sino-Japanese style, which is briefly introduced below. In the periods of KAMAKURA, MUROMACHI and AZUCI-MOMOYAMA, which covered roughly the period from the end of the twelfth century to the end of sixteenth century, the warriors class assumed political power. They preferred the more masculine style of Sino-Japanese, especially the epistolary style called SOOROO-BUN or HENTAI-KANBUN. The works of martial literature such as HEIKE-MONOGATARI (a tale of the rise and fall of the HEIKE family) were written in this style.

Early Early Modern Japanese

Early Early Modern Japanese is the language which was used by the people under the feudal rule of the TOKUGAWA Shogunate which continued from 1600 to 1868. In this period the theatrical works of KABUKI drama and BUNRAKU puppet theater and the popular literature in various genres were written in Early Early Modern Japanese. This style was preferred by the people of the townsfolk class; however the warriors class still preferred the Sino-Japanese style.

Throughout this period Japanese scholars had kept contact with the Dutch trading through the solitary port of NAGASAKI. Through this contact they acquired all sorts of European knowledge which was disseminated more widely in Japanese society during the (second half of this period.)

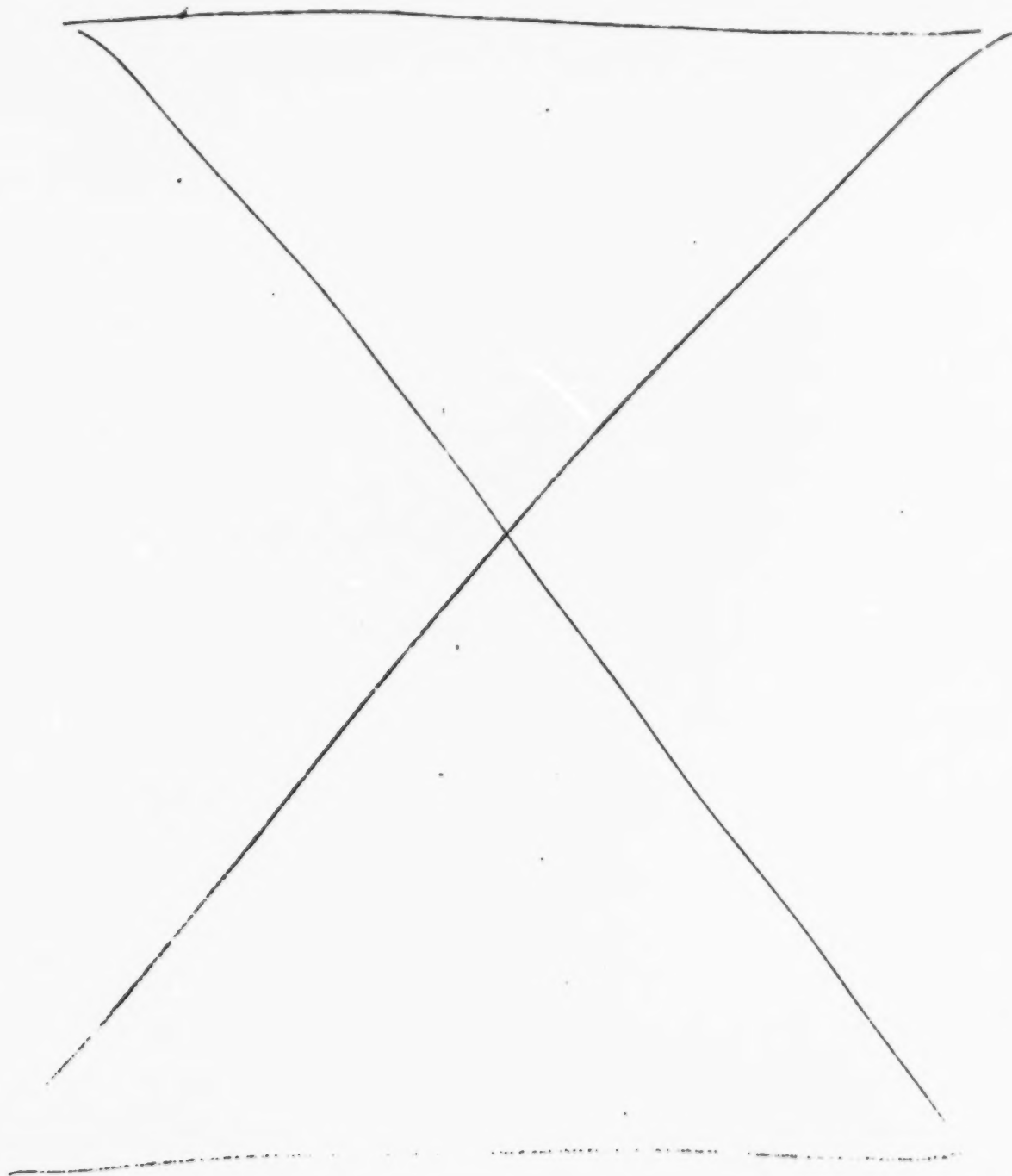
In the process many new words were created to express new concepts. In this manner the introduction of Western knowledge as well as the formation of new words for it functioned as a preparation for the explosive introduction of Western knowledge after the MEIJI Restoration.

Early Modern Japanese

The term 'Early Modern Japanese' refers the language used after the MEIJI Restoration in 1868. It is characterized by the establishment of Modern Colloquial Japanese. Simultaneously, until the end of World War II, The Sino-Japanese style also continued to be used, especially for official communication. It paralleled Colloquial Written Japanese which was now taught in the modern public education system.

Modern Japanese

It was not until immediately after World War II that Modern Colloquial Japanese was used for official communication. Although the Japanese of this last stage is nearly identical with that of the period before 1945, it is labelled 'Modern Japanese' as opposed to 'Early Modern Japanese'.



A Multiplicity of Written Styles

As introduced in the preceeding section, Japanese, that is, written Japanese had consisted of several stylistic varieties. In this section, each of them will be introduced briefly by way of preparing the ground for an explanation of the modernization processes at the time of the Meiji Restoration.

Pure Classical Chinese

Pure Classical Chinese is in this case no more really Chinese. It was written in the classical Chinese style. Visually it looks like Chinese, but it is read in classical Sino-Japanese style. Highly official documents were often recorded in this style, especially in the period of Old Japanese.

Sino-Japanese

Sino-Japanese is a style of Classical Japanese established by translating and reading Chinese texts through putting Chinese words into Japanese word order with the addition of Japanese morphological suffixes after Chinese content words.

Special secondary symbols were invented for indicating the sequential order of reading the Chinese words in accordance with the syntactic rules of Japanese. A Chinese sentence(1), for example, has a certain word order as follows, where 'S' stands for subject, 'Neg' for negation, 'V' for verb and 'N obj' for the objective noun.

(1) Chinese: S - Neg - V - N obj

In contrast, the word order of the Japanese sentence equivalent of 1) is illustrated in (2).

(2) Japanese: S - N obj - V - Neg

Since the sequential order of the elements in Japanese was indicated in

(1) by using some secondary symbols, as in (1a), the Japanese reader could understand (1) without any knowledge of Chinese by tracking down the order of the symbols, for which a, b and c stand conventionally in(1a)

(1a) S - Neg - V - N obj

c b a

An element without any symbol is to be read before all the others. It is followed by another element with a symbol which indicates the top of the sequence. Several sets of Chinese characters which imply the sequential order were used, such as numerals, 'up'-'middle'-'down' and so on.

Further, the particles and endings of Japanese words were also attached to the Chinese words using small KATAKANA syllabic letters, as schematized in(1b).

	c	b	a
(1b)	S	- Neg	- V - N obj
	prt.	end.	end. prt.

These secondary symbols and suffixes were written on both side^s of the lines of the text which were written from top to bottom.

With the aid of these symbols one could read Chinese texts in Japanese without rewriting them. Experienced scholars and officials could often read them without the aid of the secondary symbols. The Chinese texts which are read in this way, with or without the aid of the secondary symbols, are called Pure Classical Chinese.

A complete Japanese sentence can be produced when a Chinese sentence with such symbols as illustrated in(1b) is written down according to the order of the secondary symbols by adding the morphological elements with KANA syllabic letters, as illustrated in(2a).

(2a) Japanese: S - prt. - N obj - prt. - V - end. - Neg - end.

This new type of text is called 'Sino-Japanese'. Pure Classical Chinese and Sino-Japanese are twin styles. The competence of Sino-Japanese was cultivated through the philological training of reading the Chinese classics in the Pure Classic Chinese manner illustrated above. The stylistic impression of Sino-Japanese is very masculine, that is, square-built or angular, prompt and rhythmical. This style was, therefore, very much preferred by the warriors, and used for the martial literature.

Epistolary Style of Sino-Japanese

This style is a variation of Sino-Japanese with the characteristics of using a verbal suffix SOOROO, an honorific suffix which means 'to be'. This style was the standard of writing Japanese sentences for the periods between Middle and Early Early Modern Japanese.

This style is also called HENTAI-KANBUN, i.e., literally 'variation-style-Sino-Japanese'. Some phrases which appear frequently were written in the Chinese word order and read in the Japanese word order. This style is highly situation bound because of the use of the honorific suffixes by which the speaker-hearer relation was fixed. It was a style very adequate for personal communication, but not a suitable one to describe the objective situations apart from the speaker-hearer settings.

Pure Classical Japanese

The stylistic impression of this style is feminine because of its establishment through the works of ladies in the Emperor's court. Some scholars in the EDO period had made efforts to use this style for the standard written language. But most people didn't accept this attempt. The reason is not clear, but it might have been because this style was not only feminine, but also rather slow in comparison with Sino-Japanese style.

Written Colloquial Japanese

The process of the establishment of this style after the MEIJI Restoration is to be introduced in the following chapters.

Establishment of a new written language

The standard written Japanese throughout the The Shogunate era to the beginning of the MEIJI Restoration was Sino-Japanese. To write in Sino-Japanese, especially in the Epistolary SOOROOBUN style, was an indication of scholar-warrior class. The warriors (samurai) were the leading class of the Shogunate government, the regional feudal governments, and of the MEIJI Emperor's new government.

The style of Sino-Japanese, or the Epistolary variation of it was very different from that of spoken Japanese at that time. The difference was so large

that these two styles could be regarded as two different languages.

The movement for the establishment of a written language had already begun in the final years of the Shogunate era. The first proposal for the innovation was made by MAEJIMA Hisoka, an official translator of the Shogunate government, in 1866, two years before the Restoration. It was a proposal for the abolishment of Chinese characters. MAEJIMA expressed his opinion as follows:

The foundation of the nation is the education of the people. Education must be spread to all people, not to the warriors only. In order to achieve this we have to use simple letters and a simple style. We should not choose a way of teaching that is so difficult and involved that people can understand the basic content of learning only after having studied the complicated letters.

This proposal was, however, not accepted by the government.

After the Restoration, MAEJIMA and some other politicians continued to make suggestions for simplifying the written language, but none were adopted by Emperor MEIJI's new government. Some newspapers and periodicals tried to use a colloquial style for a few years immediately following the Restoration, but they abandoned it soon and continued to use the difficult Sino-japanese style.

Proposals for the enlightenment of the people were made by politicians and scholars belonging to the highest social class. They must have felt that the new style they advocated and tried

to put into practice was too pedestrian for themselves not allowing them to maintain their dignity if they were to use it in their proposals. It is a remarkable fact that all of these proposals, like the one by MAEJIMA cited above, were written in Sino-Japanese, the most difficult of written Japanese styles and the one they intended to replace.

Another movement for the establishment of a new written language was initiated after the failure of the above mentioned proposals that were inspired by the idea of enlightenment for the people. It was a movement for the unification of the spoken and the written language which was called GENBUN-ICCHI. Literally, GEN means 'speech,' BUN means 'written sentence,' and ICCHI means 'unification.' This movement did not strive for the enlightenment of the people, but was concerned with developing a revolutionary way of giving expression to one's inner feelings which is known as "naturalism" in literary history. Novelists and politicians who had studied European languages and translated European works into Japanese could not but notice the close relationship between the spoken and written language in Europe. They strongly advocated that the same should be achieved in Japanese.

First attempts at unifying the spoken and the written language were made by novelists such as FUTABATEI Shimei, YAMADA Bimyo and OZAKI Kooyoo between 1887 and 1889. The first novel written in colloquial Japanese was FUTABATEI's UKIGUMO, 'Floating

Clouds.' YAMADA wrote not only novels in colloquial Japanese, but also introductions to theoretical discussions of the unification of the spoken and the written language. They both proposed several different styles of colloquial Japanese. The colloquial style of their novels was based on the "high city variety" of the EDO, or rather TOKYO dialect. The TOKYO dialect had two varieties, the "low city variety," that is, the language of the common people, and the "high city variety" which was spoken in those parts of the city where the warriors lived. They had come to EDO from all regions of Japan as part of their duty concerning the administration of the regional feudal governments. There were also vassal-warriors who were directly subordinate to the Shogunate. Thus the warrior class in EDO developed a new common language during the Shogunate era.

FUTABATEI first tried to use the style of the storyteller ENCHOO who was very creative and prolific in his genre using the style of the low city variety. His works was highly regarded in those days. For FUTABATEI, however, this style proved to be too close to the vernacular. He therefore abandoned it and adopted a style which was much closer to that of high city speech. The creativity of the novelists in developing a new written style came to a peak at the end of the nineteenth century. They wrote all novels in Modern Colloquial Japanese, and the unification of the spoken and the written language was largely accepted by the first decade of the twentieth century.

The Ministry of Education changed the language of textbooks for primary schools to Modern Colloquial Japanese in 1903 and at the same time standardized the forms of the KANA syllabic letters which used to have several different graphic varieties.

Newspapers were more conservative. Although they had for a short time experimented with a kind of colloquial style, they returned to the difficult style of Sino-Japanese, and it was not before the end of the second decade of the twentieth century that a colloquial style was eventually adopted by the newspapers which, after all, were read by a large part of the population throughout the country. At this point the establishment of Modern Written Colloquial Japanese was completed.

Sino-Japanese and the Epistolary style were, however, still used often for official documents, administration, law, and many kinds of political publications. Yet, they were supposed to be read by the common people. This practice continued until the end of World War II. The bureaucrats, politicians, and the military seem to have thought that the Sino-Japanese style which was too difficult for ordinary people to read, possessed more gravity and dignity than the colloquial style. It should thus be emphasized the real unification of the spoken and the written language was achieved only after World War II when practically everything came to be written in Modern Written Colloquial Japanese and the Sino-Japanese style was finally relegated to classical literature.

The other phase of the modernization of Japanese besides the unification of the spoken and the written language was the formation of a modern vocabulary for the new concepts and ideas from the West. A particular aspect of the development of a modern vocabulary is discussed by SUGITO (in this volume). The present article provides some background information for a better understanding of this development.

After the MEIJI Restoration, the Japanese acquired all sorts of Western knowledge. Since the concepts they had to deal with in this connection were all new to them, the translators had to create new words, for which they employed the wordformation rules of KANGO, that is, Sino-Japanese words. In those days, Chinese philology was part of the education of every scholar. Intellectuals, therefore, possessed extensive knowledge of Chinese characters and words which proved to be an important resource for terminology formation. Instead of creating new words, they often (re-)discovered ancient Chinese words approximating the intended meaning which they then associated with new concepts. During the early years of the MEIJI period, the translators proposed several alternative words for the new concepts on the basis of their knowledge of Classical Chinese. More than a dozen words were sometimes produced for a single concept. Such lexical chaos continued for a couple of decades after the Restoration.

As yet, the lexicographical as well as the lexicological explanations of the integration of modern vocabulary into the

Japanese lexicon is still very inadequate, a fact which is due partly to the enormous number of items that were then created but did not survive in the modern vocabulary, and partly to the overwhelming amount of publications.

Prior to the introduction of so many Western concepts during the MEIJI period, there was a long tradition in Japan of Western learning, especially Dutch learning. The Japanese experienced their first contact with Europeans in the sixteenth century when Spanish and Portuguese missionaries came to Japan. They borrowed some words then, some of which are still in use today.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, the Japanese began to engage seriously in the study of Dutch learning, which was called RAN-GAKU, RAN being the second syllable of Holland and GAKU meaning 'study.' RAN-GAKU was pursued by scholars in Nagasaki and Edo who translated many Dutch publications. One of the most famous such publication was the translation of a Dutch medicine book, "Tafel Anatomia" entitled KAITAI-SHINSHO from 1774. It contains a great many translations of Western medical terms. During the final years of the Shogunate, gradual familiarization with European civilization was accomplished largely by official translators in Nagasaki and through scholars in Edo who studied Dutch and later also English and French publications. This background of study of Western civilization, however perfunctory, saved the Japanese from being completely overwhelmed at the beginning of the MEIJI Restoration

in 1868 when contacts with Western civilization were established very suddenly on all levels.

Public Education: A Prerequisite of Modernization

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The early development of a system of public education during the EDO period provided an important background for the success in adapting the Japanese language to the needs of modern society. The benefits of public education were not reserved to those who had actively supported and taken part in the modernization of the Japanese society, but shared with a considerable part of the population at large. This educational background enabled the new government to establish a new educational system for primary and secondary schools shortly after the Restoration.

While during the TOKUGAWA period (1600-1868) children of the warrior class were normally educated in fief schools to be discussed below, elementary education for commoners as well as some warrior children was provided by private schools which were known as TERA KO YA, TERA meaning 'temple,' KO 'child' and YA 'shop' or 'shopkeeper.' TERA KO YA were first managed by Buddhist priests, usually on the precincts of the local temple, later however they were taken over by teachers who had no connection with the temple.

The TERA KO YA schools provided a solid training in the three fundamental skills, reading, writing and calculating. The epistolary style was taught, usually with the aid of models called ORAI

MONO, where ORAI means 'going and coming,' that is, 'communication' and MONO means 'thing.' During the TOKUGAWA period more than 7000 textbooks were published. In EDO alone more than 10,000 TERA KOYA were founded in that period. It is estimated that about 40% of the boys and from 2 to 17% of the girls of each age group received some kind of systematic education. It should be noted that this attendance level compares favorably with Western Europe and the United States at the time and was far higher than that of Eastern Europe and other parts of Asia.

Secondary education on a more advanced level was provided in two kinds of schools. The sons of the warriors of local feudal governments attended local government schools called HAN-KOO under the jurisdiction of the DAIMYOO or lords. (HAN means 'feudal clan' and KOO means 'school.') Occasionally the sons of commoners were also admitted to these schools. They studied Chinese philology, Confucian writings in Pure Classical Chinese, as well as the Sino-Japanese written language. Some schools also taught Dutch.

The other type of institution of secondary education were SHI-JUKU, that is, 'private schools' which were run by famous scholars. At these schools students were provided with a training in Chinese philosophy and educated to develop their own thoughts and opinions on philosophical as well as political matters.

A nationwide system of general education was established by

the new government immediately after the MEIJI Restoration. The Ministry of Education was created in 1871, three years after the Restoration, and a year thereafter the organization of a modern system of public education was detailed in the famous "Education Order." In 1873 more than 12,500 primary schools were founded which accommodated more than 1,145,000 pupils. The overall school attendance rate had reached some 28% then. Although historians have yet to provide us with exact data for the number of teachers employed at these schools, it is obvious that the government was able to expand the teaching staff very rapidly.

The success of the government in establishing a new system of general education was a key factor of the rapid modernization of Japanese society during the first two decades of the MEIJI period. More research is needed about the relationship between social and linguistic development at the time. However, to conclude, I would like to emphasize that the high level of general education at the beginning of the MEIJI period must be seen as a fundamental precondition of the rapid development of the modern written colloquial style of Japanese.